

Anne Rice's THE MUMMY

COMIC SHOP NEWS™

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From

A-1 COMICS

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A Comics Specialty Outlet

Millennium Year One Planned; 999 To Go

Millennium may have entered the comic book market with a single hit, *The Wild Wild West*—but don't think that they're a one-hit wonder. Even before *The Wild Wild West* completes its run, Millennium will premiere its second comic title; before their first year is completed, they will have three other projects in comic shops, and several more in the works.

The Wild Wild West four-part series, continuing the John Wilkes Booth-Dr. Loveless, will come to a close this fall. Millennium reports that the response to this series has been overwhelmingly strong; a second *Wild Wild West* limited series is under consideration.

In October, Millennium's second series debuts; it promises to be even bigger than *The Wild Wild West*. *The Mummy*, or *Ramses the Damned* is an eight-part

fully painted comic book series based on the popular novel by horror writer Anne Rice. Comics fans are already familiar with Rice's best-known work, *The Vampire Lestat*. *The Mummy* is an erotic tale of the resurrection of Ramses, the Mummy, in Edwardian England. Ramses is not the stereotyped shuffling, grunting mummy from grade-B horror films; instead, he is a charming, refined, determined man who is able to blend in with the British society that surrounds him. He assumes the role of Dr. Ramsey, an Egyptologist (after all, who knows more about ancient Egypt than one who lived there?), and uses his position to bring to an end matters that have haunted his soul for centuries. *The Mummy* is illustrated by layout artist John Hebert and finishing artist Mark Menendez; Faye Perozich, who has adapted the Vampire

Lestat for Innovation, will adapt this Anne Rice novel to comics as well. The first issue of the comic book is slated to reach comic shops at about the same time Rice's latest novel, *The Witching Hour*, is released.

After *The Mummy*, Millennium again draws from the horror well with *Nosferatu: Plague of Terror*, a four-issue limited series that focuses on a classic vampire who is quite different from the Dracula vampire image. The storyline follows Orlock the vampire from the 14th Century to modern times.

Following that will be a revival of Adam Hughes and Mark Ellis' *Death Hawk*; this science fiction series was briefly published by Adventure Comics. The new *Death Hawk* limited series will be entitled *Deathwing: The Logs of the Peregrine*; it will feature a completely

new story of Death Hawk, futuristic "salvage expert," and Cyke, his protoplasmic partner.

The final project announced by Millennium is *The Unidentified*, a series that will focus on UFO phenomena. *The Unidentified* will be deeply rooted in real UFO reports and true-life encounters, and will even explore governmental cover-ups, the long-rumored connections between aliens and the government, and other conspiratorial subplots.

Millennium has other projects in development for 1991; while publisher Paul Davis wouldn't reveal just what he has on line, he did say that the company is looking into several licensed properties which he predicts will be "major hitters in the comics marketplace."

by WAYNE LEE

COMIC SHOP NEWS™

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Byrne Joined by Other Top Talents To Offer In-Depth Look at Batman

Want to see Batman's exploits in three dimensions? If so, you have a limited number of choices. You can buy a copy

of the 1953 *3-D Batman* comic for about \$800; you can buy a copy of the 1966 *3-D Batman* comic for about \$150...

Or you can buy a copy of *Batman 3-D* for \$9.95 and enjoy the best of the new and the old Batman in his three-dimensional glory.

Pretty easy choice, huh?...

Batman 3-D, set for November 2nd release, is an 80-page graphic album that leads off with a major new Batman story written and illustrated by John Byrne. Ray Zone, well known for the 3-D work he has done through his company 3-D Zone, is handling all the 3-D effects for the story.

Byrne's tale takes Batman through a gauntlet of villains and challenges in a battle against The Penguin, the Joker, Two-Face, and the Riddler. A backup story featuring art by Curt Swan and Sheldon Moldoff is reprinted from the very expensive *3-D Batman* comic of the 1950's. The final segment of *Batman 3-D* is devoted to a special 3-D pin-up section featuring Batman and his most famous foes illustrated by Arthur Adams, Jim Aparo, Bret Blevins and Al Williamson, Dave Gibbons, Klaus Janson, Mike Mignola, Jerry Ordway, George Perez, Alex

Toth, Barry Windsor-Smith, Mike Zeck, and others.

Each copy of *Batman 3-D* will also include a free set of 3-D glasses; the book will also con-

tain a text history of Batman and his villains to accompany this non-continuity story.

by ALEX KIRKLAND



Aircel Fired Up About New Lomax Series

Don Lomax is well known to readers of *Vietnam Journal* for his somber view of the Vietnam War through the eyes of a veteran and a journalist. When these fans hear that Lomax's latest creation, *Fire Team*, also deals with American Vietnam vets and with Vietnamese innocents, they may think that the book is just another Vietnam story. In reality, it's far from it.

In *Fire Team*, the Vietnam vets in question are dead—in fact, they've been dead for fifteen years as the story begins. The Vietnamese characters now live in New York City; they were able to get out of Vietnam in 1975 during the evacuation at the end of the Vietnam War. Cam Ky MacMurphy, an infant born of a Vietnamese mother and an American father, escaped from Vietnam with his uncle, Nguyen Van Tan. His escape was very costly, though; six Green Berets gave their lives so that the two could escape on the last chopper to Saigon.

"Now, fifteen years later, Cam and his uncle are under assault by a hostile street gang calling themselves 'Future Shock,'" *Fire Team* creator Don Lomax

said. "Their attempt at resistance ends up with their small business being burned to the ground."

"But Cam and his uncle will not have to battle the evil alone. The six dead Americans have returned as restless phantoms to right wrong—a legacy of America's most tumultuous and confusing time of history...And who has more of a right to walk the Earth as restless spirits than those lost in Vietnam?"

Fire Team will debut as a six-issue monthly miniseries beginning in December 1990 from Aircel. Don and Rose Lomax will produced the ink-wash halftone art for the series. Each issue of *Fire Team* will be priced at \$2.50.

by ALEX KIRKLAND



NEWS BRIEFS

ELEKTRA LIVES THIS WINTER

Elektra Lives Again, the long-awaited Frank Miller-lynn Varley Elektra graphic novel that reveals what happens when Matt Murdock becomes aware that Elektra is indeed alive, is finally on the Marvel schedule! The graphic novel is slated for December 13th release, making it the perfect Christmas gift—provided that no unexpected snags delay the book...and while we don't want to sound ominous, you know what's happened with almost every single hardcover project from every publisher in the past few months...

Elektra Lives Again will be offered in hardcover only; the 96-page graphic novel will be priced at \$24.95. Not bad, considering that you'll have a front-row seat to witness the reintroduction of Elektra into the Marvel Universe—and the return of Frank Miller to his most famous creation!



CREATURE FEATURES ALLRED & MIREAULT

Creatures of the Id, a one-shot from Caliber set for October release, presents the first Caliber work done by two top independent comics creators. This book unites M. Dalton Allred, creator of *Dead Air* and *Graphique Musique* for Slave Labor, with Bernie Mireault, artist of the *Jam* and one of Matt Wagner's *Grendel* storylines.

Each story in *Creatures of the Id* will be pencilled by Allred and inked by Mireault; Allred will also write one of the tales, while the other two are written by Jeffrey Lang.

"We're really excited by this project," publisher Gary Reed said. "Jeff Lang had sent us some story ideas and I liked a few of them and asked him if he had any artists lined up for them. When he told me that Mike and Bernie were interested in doing the one issue, I was really excited. Mike Allred is one of my favorite artists and I've always been extremely impressed with Bernie's work."

Creatures of the Id is scheduled for October release; the \$2.95 comic will feature a wraparound cover painted by Mireault.



THE END OF (ANOTHER) ERA

You know you're in trouble when the bargain-priced comics start featuring words like "still only" in front of their pricetags. If you've been paying attention, you've probably noticed that the cheapest comics on the stands—*Superman*, *Action*, and *Adventures of Superman*—have borne the slug "still only 75¢" for the past six months or so. They won't carry that slug beginning this November, though; that's when they go up to \$1 an issue.

"As always, we held fast with the lower price as long as we could. It is with regret that we witness the passing of the 75¢ comic," Tammy Brown of DC said, "but DC will continue to give you a high-quality product at a reasonable price." While everyone hates to see prices go up, you should remember that DC maintained a line of 75¢ comics for more than a year after everyone else boosted prices—and they're still offering bargains like the 99¢ *Lobo* #1.

GRAPHITTI EXPANDS YOUR WARDROBE

Graphitti has three new t-shirts slated for release this fall; now you can retire those shirts that you've been wearing through the summer! The *Fahrd and Grey Mouser* t-shirt features a new full-color silkscreen design by Mike Mignola on a white shirt; the *Hellraiser* t-shirt features the logo from the popular Marvel Comics series on a black shirt; and the *Marshal Law: Mercy My Ass* shirt features an ominous drawing of the good Marshal, illustrated by Kevin O'Neill in seven colors on a black shirt. If that isn't enough to complete your wardrobe, you can also add the *Flash logo* t-shirt, available on (what else?) a red t-shirt. All four shirts are available in sizes from small to extra large for \$12.95.



COVERING ALL THE BASES...

Todd McFarlane has been the sales phenomenon of 1990—and in fact, he's been the sales phenomenon of all time insofar as comics are concerned. A lot of fans who have scrambled to get complete runs of his *Amazing Spider-Man* and *Spider-Man* work don't realize that there's a lot of McFarlane Spidey art they haven't seen—unless they've been buying *Marvel Tales* and other books that McFarlane has done the covers for in the past couple of years.

If you missed out on those, you'll have a chance to admire those covers in *The Marvel Poster Book*. This unique book features eight magazine-sized sheets and eight gatefold sheets; each sheet has a poster printed on the front and on the back, all taken from various covers done by Todd (not every cover features Spider-Man—but you know that Marvel isn't going to disappoint the Spidey-fans out there by shorting you). That's 32 posters in magazine-sized format—and it can be yours for only \$2.50! Look for it on November 29th.



A WARM HOLIDAY TALE

You may think that the Archie universe is a pretty stable, predictable place; you might be surprised to find out that, every now and then, significant events do occur that force readers to look at the Archie characters in a different light. In *Riverdale High* #4, for example, the relationship between Miss Grundy and her students evolves as Miss Grundy faces a traumatic occurrence—a fire in her apartment building that forces her to accept Betty Cooper's family's hospitality. With Christmas approaching, Betty, Archie, and the rest of the gang display true Christmas spirit by pitching in to help Miss Grundy restore her home (or apartment) for the holidays. It's a touching story from Wilcox, Goldberg, and Esposito that breaks the typical student/teacher pattern. Look for it on November 15th.

BLUE COMET OFFERS TWO SPECIAL EVENTS FOR FALL

Blue Comet Press is adding two special books to its fall line: *Varmints Special #1* and *Rough Raiders Annual #1*. *Varmints Special #1* is a 32-page comic featuring a variety of anthropomorphic characters, including Outrageous Rat, Clifford Lemming, and the Blazing-Tales Varmints. Dave Garcia, artist of Panda Khan, contributes the cover for this \$2.50 comic. *Rough Raiders Annual #1* is not only the first annual from Blue Comet, it's also the issue in which the Rough Raiders die. So do they really die, or do they only "comic-book" die? Well, publisher Craig Stormon says that you'll find out for sure in the next issue of *Rough Raiders* (is there a clue in there? You be the judge)... *Rough Raiders Annual #1* is also priced at \$2.50.

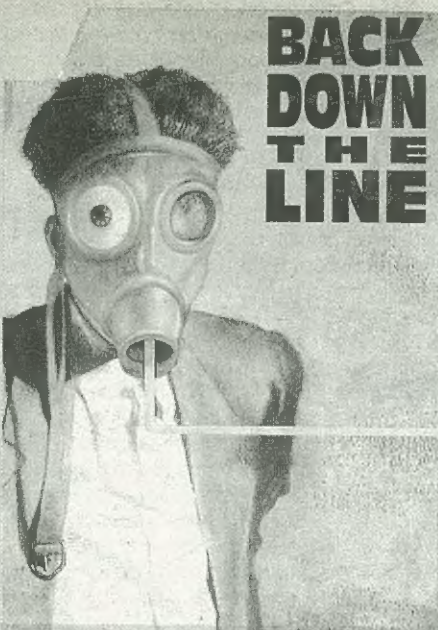


A HALLOW VICTORY

The British Invasion has been very successful for both Marvel and DC, so Innovation Comics has decided maybe it's time for them to bring in some new British art talent to the American comics market. You can see the artwork of their find, John Lang, in *All Hallow's Eve*, a prestige-format full color 48-page comic book scheduled for mid-October release.

Set in Wicklow, Ireland, *All Hallow's Eve* tells the story of the creation of the first Jack O'Lantern, the only thing the walking dead fear. The story by Mitchell Perkins is rich in Halloween tradition—as is the moody, detailed artwork.

All Hallow's Eve, a Halloween treat from Innovation, is priced at \$4.95.



BACK DOWN THE LINE

BOLTON HEADS BACK DOWN THE LINE

Back Down the Line, a 48-page full-color graphic album from Eclipse, is a must-have item for fans of John Bolton's artwork. This volume reprints five stories, all illustrated by Bolton, that originally appeared in *Epic Illustrated* and *Pathways to Fantasy*. The stories are written by Chris Claremont, Jo Duffy, and others—but the real attraction of this volume is the lavish art of John Bolton. Even if you have all the stories, you might want to add *Back Down the Line* to your Bolton collection, because it contains three previously unpublished Bolton illustrations. *Back Down the Line* is scheduled for mid-December release; it is priced at \$8.95.

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NEWS BRIEFS

TERRY SETS SAIL TWICE THIS FALL

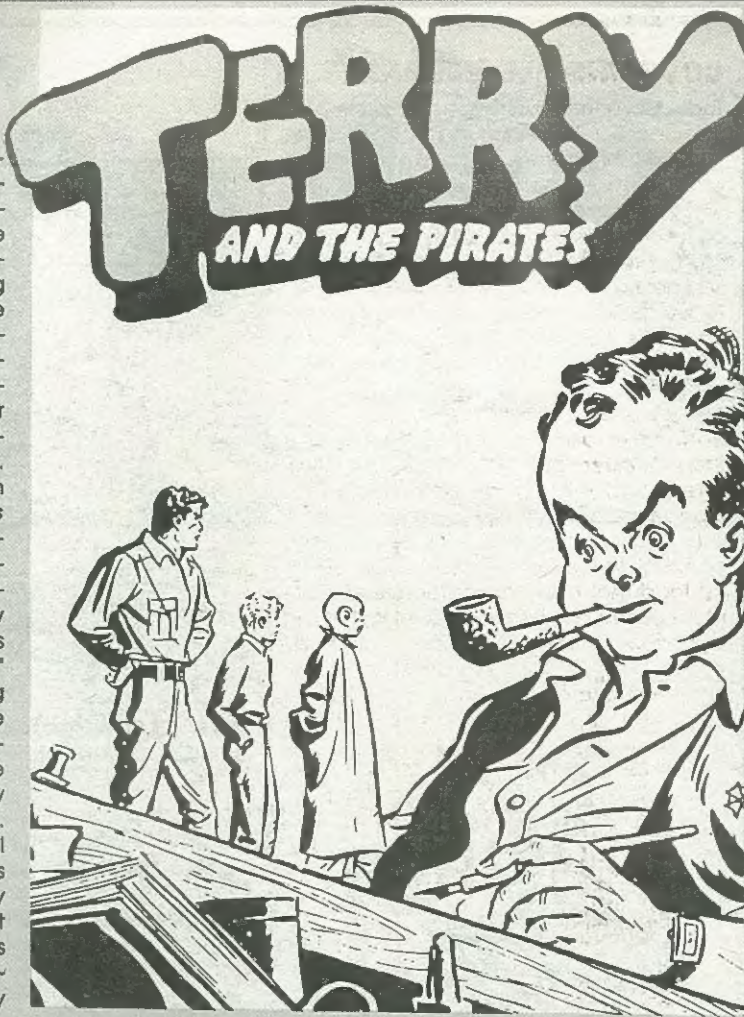
Terry and the Pirates, Milton Caniff's famous South-Seas-adventure series that has inspired, among other things, the Wolverine-Madripoor storylines, will be published in full color this fall by two different publishers. NBM will publish *Terry & The Pirates* in a twelve-volume full color series that will feature each Sunday strip spread across two 8.5" x 11" pages, allowing NBM to offer the Sunday installments in the same size they originally appeared in. Each volume will contain a year's worth of Sunday strips. The first year's storylines are totally separate from the daily strips' storylines,

and can be read separately. NBM's *Terry and the Pirates In Color Volume 1* will be clothbound with gold stamping on the cover and spine and a full-color dustjacket; it will retail for \$35 and is slated for late October release.

Kitchen Sink, the publishers of Milton Caniff's *Steve Canyon* and *Male Call* strips, also has a *Terry and the Pirates* volume slated for this fall, and it too will include color Sunday strips. There are important differences in the two publishers' *Terry and the Pirates* volumes, however. The Kitchen Sink hardcover will reprint all *Terry and the Pirates* strips, both the black and white dailies and the full-color Sundays, directly from syndicate and artist's proofs. (NBM has previously reprinted *Terry and the Pirates* dailies and Sundays in black and white in hardcover; the dailies have also been reprinted in softcover.) Denis Kitchen stresses how important it is that these pages be published from the color proofs; "Every *Terry* Sunday page is like a watercolor painting," he said, "with blended hues and startling bold primaries. It is said that the *New York Daily News* had one engraver whose main job it was to hand-tool the metal printing plates of *Terry*...The artwork will be expertly laser-scanned to capture the original lush tones of the work." The Kitchen Sink volume is being edited by Rick Marschall, who is also responsible for the *Complete Little Nemo in Slumberland* color volumes from Fantagraphics.

The Kitchen Sink *Terry and the Pirates Volume 1* is the first of a 16-volume set that will reprint every *Terry* and the *Pirates* strip. It will collect the series beginning with the opening strip on October 22, 1934, and will include all dailies and Sundays up to August 3, 1935. The Kitchen Sink volume will reduce the Sunday strips slightly to fit them onto a single page. Kitchen Sink's *Terry and the Pirates Volume One* is priced at \$34.95.

While *Terry Nantier* of NBM points out that their *Terry and the Pirates* volume is authorized by the syndicate, Denis Kitchen adds that *Terry and the Pirates* is in public domain; furthermore, Kitchen points out that Kitchen Sink has worked with Milton Caniff (and since his death, with his family) as his authorized publisher, and has paid Caniff and his family royalties for all Caniff work published. Which edition should you go



with? That's your choice—but if you enjoy exotic locales and action-packed heroics, then you'll have to have one of these two *Terry and the Pirates* volumes.

SOME STERN ADVICE

A lot of artists are spotlighted in their own portfolios—but how many writers can make the same claim? Roger Stern can!

No, Roger Stern's portfolio doesn't consist of typewritten scripts; it's a portfolio featuring six black and white plates illustrated by some of Roger Stern's friends—friends such as John Byrne, Jerry Ordway, Windy Pini, Ron Frenz, Karl Kesel, Tom Lyle, June Brigman, and Terry Austin. The six plates feature original character concepts for series that don't exist currently—but that doesn't mean that you won't see 'em in comics in the future! *The Art of Roger Stern (and his Friends) Portfolio* also includes a half-sized booklet of character references. Everything is included in a presentation folder featuring a color collage on the cover, packed in a black and white illustrated envelope. Peregrine Publishing is making the entire portfolio available for only \$19.95; as with all specialty items of this sort, be sure to let your local comic shop know that you have to have it—and tell 'em that CSN sent you.



THEY TOOK A SUMMER VACATION

Justice League International Quarterly was supposed to have started this past summer; no one wants to work hard in the summer, though, least of all a new super-team like Booster Gold's Conglomerate. That's why Booster and crew took a holiday. They're still planning on appearing in *Justice League International Quarterly #1*, but you won't have a chance to see it until November 8th. This 80-page tale by Keith Giffen, Marc DeMatteis, Chris Sprouse, and Bruce Patterson is priced at \$2.95.

HELLO, DOLLY

Barbie, the champion of the toy-shop racks for the past thirty years, ventures into a new realm this November—but she's put herself in the good hands of Marvel Comics, so she should do just fine. Beginning on November 15th, Barbie ventures into the comic shop in the first-ever issue of a comic devoted entirely to Barbie, Ken, and crew.

"We're not saying she'll outshine Marvel superstars like Spider-Man, but the target readership on these titles is equal to the total number of people who have ever owned a Barbie doll—and that's just about every woman in America," Kurt Busiek of Marvel Comics said.

Barbie #1 will be shipped to comic shops pre-bagged; the bag is necessary, because each copy of *Barbie #1* will include a special bonus Barbie credit card. A week later, the first issue of a second *Barbie* title, *Barbie Fashion*, will also ship pre-bagged; it will include a Barbie door-hanger.



Barbie #1 is created by Trusiani, Wilshire, and Lucas; *Barbie Fashion #1* is by Trusiani, Cool, and Drake. Ace artist John Romita Sr. will supply the covers for both books. In addition to comic book stories, the books will also feature information on fashion, beauty, and doll care. Each book is priced at \$1; they will soon be joined by additional *Barbie* titles.

MODEL BY DAY, SELLOUT BY PUBLISHER

Model By Day, Kevin J. Taylor's two-issue story of Electra, a model who pursues a crime-fighting career by night, proved more popular than even the publisher, Rip Off Press, expected.

The first issue sold out entirely upon release and is proving very hard to find. Rip Off is considering a reprint of this issue; the other option that they're weighing is a one-volume collection that will contain both issues of the limited series as well as new material. CSN will keep you updated...



BREYFOGLE COVER UP TO HIS NORM-AL STANDARDS

Norm Breyfogle, fan-favorite artist of *Batman*, has found a little bit of spare time to illustrate the cover for *Maze Agency 17*; there's no reason to tell you how nice the cover is, since the Breyfogle art speaks for itself. Of course, once you get past the cover, you'll find another well-crafted mystery by Mike Barr inside; this issue is an appropriately suspenseful Halloweenish tale involving an October camping trip, a religious cult, and murder. Darick Robertson, the artist for Innovation's upcoming *Child's Play 2* adaptation, is also the artist for this issue of *Maze Agency*, which should be on the racks in mid-October. (Any of you who have enjoyed the whodunit mysteries *Max Allan Collins* has presented in *Ms. Tre e Quarterly* should check out *Maze Agency*; for almost two years now, this title has presented some of the best play-fair mysteries ever featured in comics, along with some top-notch characterization and artwork!)

THE STARK FUTURE

John Byrne, John Romita Jr., and Bob Wiacek are back! Well, you might not have even known they were gone—but the trio had originally only signed on to do the *Armor Wars II* storyline in *Iron Man*. They've had so much fun with it, though, that they've agreed to come up with a follow-up storyline guest-starring the Black Widow (who, as you may know, was introduced to the Marvel Universe in an *Iron Man* storyline). Natasha joins the supporting cast of *Iron Man* beginning with issue 267, on sale in February, as she seeks Iron Man's help to uncover a double agent in the US Government. At the same time, the Mandarin is still seeking vengeance against Iron Man—and this can't be good news for our favorite Armored Avenger.

By the way, *Armor Wars II* is running a bit longer than the six-part story originally envisioned; *Iron Man 265*, on sale December 27th, features Part 8 of the storyline. In this issue, Iron Man confronts DeWitt in hopes of discovering who is really behind *Armor Wars II*. As a special treat, John Byrne is not only writing but also illustrating this issue of *Iron Man*; Bob Wiacek will supply the inks.

GOLGO 13 BECOMES COLOR SERIES 2

Golgo 13, the suspenseful story of an assassin, will be the second Viz color comic book. Viz will offer the series beginning in the spring of 1991 in the same square-bound format they'll be using for this fall's *Gunhed* series. Viz will also distribute the "stop-motion" video of *Golgo 13* as well. While *Golgo 13* has been available on a limited basis in America, the book has never been available in full color prior to this Viz series.

C S N P R E V I E W S

Give & Take by Cliff Biggers & Brett Brooks

This month, Cliff Biggers (in plain type) and Brett Brooks (in *italic type*) reach into their comic book grab-bag and come out with...a complex, mature revitalization of DC's sf B-team heroes; a new superhero book from First Comics; two quite different Japanese manga translations--different from one another and from virtually any other manga translation published thus far; and latest issues of two superhero titles from Eclipse and Marvel that have surprised a number of readers with their quality.

Twilight is pure Howard Chaykin; of course, this means that some people are going to be bothered by the interpretation he brings to some of DC's early-Silver-Age science fiction heroes, but that's par for the course. With his *Shadow* and *Blackhawk* projects, Chaykin disturbed readers who were looking for predictable characters who offered no surprises. You can be sure that *Twilight* will be the most unsettling of all his DC projects--provided very many readers actually remember most of these characters.

These certainly aren't what people will remember. I think that you're right in your assessment that this will be the most unsettling Chaykin re-write yet. Those fans that remember these characters will tend to be the older collectors with a long standing fondness for these characters being exactly the way they remember, and they certainly aren't that any longer.

For me, the most intriguing characterizations are the Star Rovers; Chaykin actually gives them personalities (you know, I always had trouble keeping Homer and Rick separate once I got past their occupations) and establishes a relationship that seems believable. I never was sure why these three got along so well, considering their incredibly diverse backgrounds and experiences; as it turns out, they didn't--at least, not according to Chaykin's version.

Star Hawkins is another character who gets an intriguing reinterpretation à la Chaykin--but even more importantly, his robot secretary Ilda becomes more than a cliché. You have to admit, no matter how much you enjoyed Star Hawkins originally (and I did--in fact, I have fond memories of all these second-string sf heroes except for *Manhunter 2070*, who never managed to interest me), that Ilda of the 1960's had little more personalities than the Jetson's robot-maid.

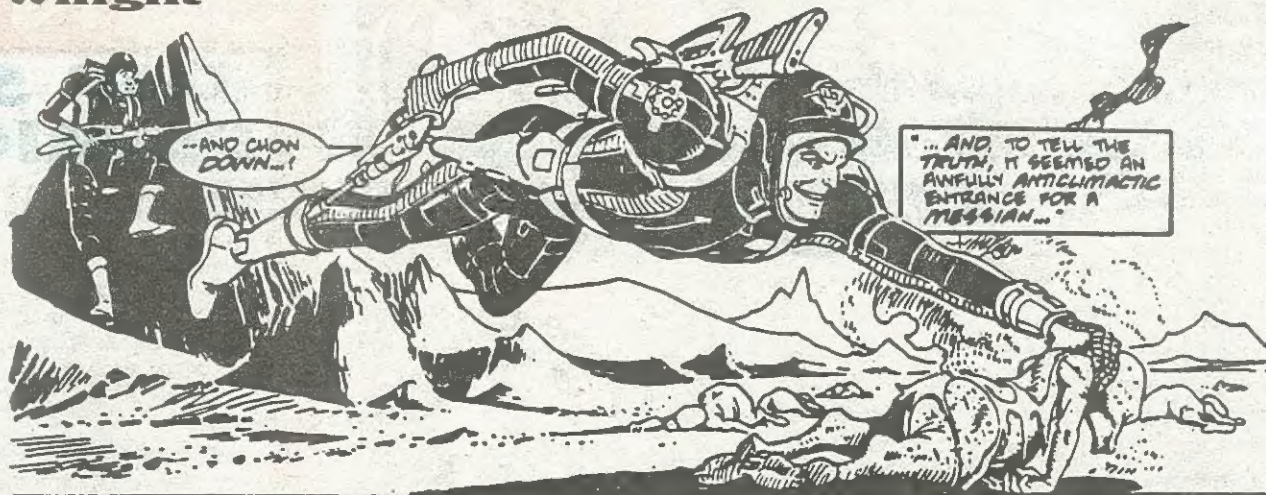
The most drastic change, of course, can be seen in Tommy Tomorrow; Chaykin's basic mistrust for governmental-military organizations comes through in the Aryan interpretation of blond-haired, blue-eyed Tommy Tomorrow, who quickly becomes the villain of the story.

Yeah, I'll always remember Tommy Tomorrow as a Nazi Commander... This is a strange interpretation. I also get the feeling that Chaykin was wanting to use, or perhaps even intended to use, Kamandi in this story. Those ape-men that were trying to live with humanity, but still be apes, seemed vaguely reminiscent of that old Kirby-world.

Don't get the wrong idea: *Twilight* is not a series whose only purpose is to show us what's been going on with the b-team sf folks since we last saw 'em. Instead, *Twilight* is a complex story of immortality, human egocentrism, and religious fervor spread out over the millennia of DC's future world. This story would have been powerful reading even if the characters were strangers to us; it only accentuates the story that they're old acquaintances for fans who have been DC readers for decades now. Even if you never have heard of any of these characters, you'll have no trouble enjoying the series--and in fact, you may enjoy it more than those older readers who can't abide "tampering" with established characters.

This is a book filled with asides guaranteed to please older fans; there are a cou-

Twilight



ple of characters named Broome and Fox (of course, had there been no John Broome and no Gardner Fox, most of these sf characters would never have existed), and there's a little weapon called a "magnus" that destroys robots instantly...

Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez turns in his most accessible art job ever with this series; I presume that Chaykin did some breakdowns or thumbnails or something for *Twilight*, because Garcia-Lopez looks more Chaykinesque here than he ever has before. His art is perfect for the book; it's an extremely complex tapestry of locales, races, and characters, generously seasoned with panoramic full-page and double-page spreads, and only an artist of Garcia-Lopez' caliber could have pulled it off. Many artists would be challenged by a story that had two mustached characters in the same book; Garcia-Lopez give each a different build and a different facial structure so that readers should never be confused.

I think that Chaykin had something to do with the character design in this book as well, all of these people had that undeniable Howard Chaykin Designer Fashion label hanging from their clothes. The overall art I think works extremely well. I agree that Chaykin probably did layouts or gave detailed descriptions of layout, because every page had some of Chaykin's dynamic storytelling on it, and when that was combined with the detail of Garcia Lopez, the result is really nice.

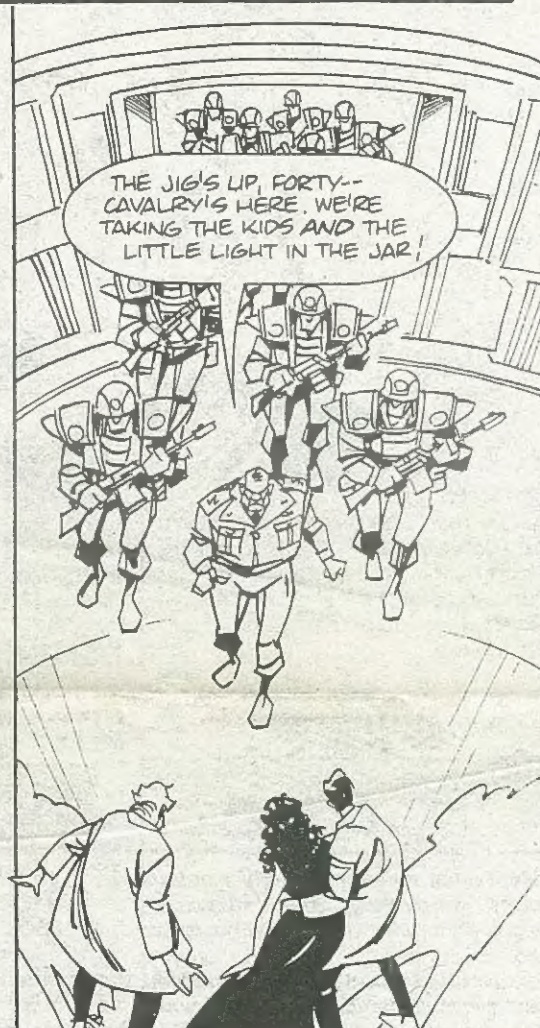
I suspect that a lot of fans will be dis-

cussing *Twilight* for the next three months; it's not the sort of book you read and forget about.

This seems a month for unforgettable books. Every once in a while a book comes out that is bound to make someone say, "what the heck is that doing in a comic book?" Well, *Hotel Harbour-View* is that kind of book.

The story is a richly detailed account of a man who is waiting to die--but that description only touches on the surface of this wonderful book. *Hotel Harbour-View* is as much about death and decay as natural forces as it is anything else. Lying inside the doors of *Hotel Harbour-View* is a microcosm of society. The Hotel is a dying landmark of the city of Hong Kong, which is portrayed as a city that has lost any of its former glory to the stretches of time. The cast of the book is small and well crafted. The main character remains unidentified; he is an everyman in search of his own dream, and knowing what that dream will bring him. Of the other cast members, Soon was the most captivating. She is a woman who lives a life she doesn't seem to like, but realizes that it's too late to escape from. Every character in this book seems to realize that they have no future, that they are condemned--with one exception, the coffin maker. Death goes on.

In this regard, I see *Hotel Harbour-View* as being a novel about Hong Kong as much as it is a novel set in Hong Kong. The characters are condemned, just as the



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city is; they know that death awaits them very soon, just as the city does--at least, the city knows that it will no longer live as it has. It's a powerful instance of character and plot being tied to the setting of the story.

I cannot praise the writing of this book highly enough. It is developed as a story rather than a comic book, and that is liable to drive away people who feel that comics have limitations and should stick with them. But for those readers that like experimentation *Hotel Harbour-View* is a treat.

The only book that comes to mind that I can compare *Hotel Harbour-View* to is *Violent Cases* by Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean. Both books take a very real situation and throw it to an abstract slant. Nothing extraordinary happens; people live and people die. This is the real world, but just when you think you have grasped the world, it changes, twisting around to show a new perspective.

Hotel Harbour-View has one segment that stands out in my mind even now, long after I read the book; in the opening of the story, a passenger is explaining why Hong Kong, the city filled with neon lights, has no blinking lights. His explanation--stark, resigned, but not intended to be threatening--is not only a vivid, memorable piece of writing, but it sets the tone for the story which follows.

The art on *Hotel Harbour-View* is top notch. This is very accessible Japanese styled art, with a storytelling style that is unsurpassed. The book does contain ma-

& REVIEWS



ture themes and is intended for adult audiences, but considering the subject matter and the storyline, that is probably for the best.

Hotel Harbour-View is possibly the best comic I've read this year. If you read Japanese comics for the art, buy this one. If you read comics because they are "sophisticated" read this one. If you don't read comics, read *Hotel Harbour-View*. Stories like this don't happen very often.

Our second manga translation of the month, *Lost Continent*, is a very subtle book; rather than using the standard comic book technique of throwing in all the hooks early in the first issue, Akhiro Yamada constructs his story much more cinematically, laying the groundwork in the first issue and adding a couple of mystifying plot twists near the end that leave the reader only slightly less puzzled than the protagonists (of course we aren't as mystified as they are--we've read the story synopsis, right?!).

In fact, it's almost impossible to resist comparing *Lost Continent* to the sort of film John Carpenter or Brian De Palma might do; it's a very cinematically structured work, using its elements of fantasy/sf sparingly, playing much more on an underlying edge of paranoia to drive the story along.

One of the most cinematic aspects of this book was, for me, the way that the characters were handled. Not their personalities as such, but the way that they moved across the page and looked past the "camera" at the other characters. There seemed a real sense of flow to them. The characters were also well handled as interactive narrators for the reader; there is very little boxed narrative used to describe anything in this issue. I found it very refreshing.

The art in *Lost Continent* is atypical of any Japanese manga I've seen; it's very open, very loose, and almost minimalist in places. A few panels look stylistically very much like pen-and-ink illustrations that every college art student has done early in his education; they're not at all amateurish, mind you, just different than standard comic illustration.

Lost Continent is a story of...well, a lost continent, and a government conspiracy, and strangely powered beings, and all sorts of fantastic elements--but you only get a small taste of that in the first book. Yamada lays the groundwork here, and

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CSN CHARTS

TOP 50 COMICS

CSN's Top Seller charts are based on figures supplied by the two major distributors, Diamond Distribution and Capital City Distribution, as well as figures by a cross-section of comics specialty shops. The distributor's figures represent retailer orders placed on the titles, while the information from stores represents copies sold.

1. Spider-Man 3
2. X-Men 269
3. Ghost Rider 6
4. Aliens Vs. Predator 2
5. Amazing Spider-Man 340
6. Batman 455
7. Terminator 1
8. Detective 622
9. Wolverine 32
10. Aliens: Earth War 2
11. New Mutants 94
12. Ghost Rider 5 gold edition
13. X-Factor 59
14. Punisher 40
15. Punisher 41
16. World's Finest 2
17. Moon Knight 19
18. Excalibur 30
19. Web of Spider-Man 69
20. Iron Man 261
21. Spectacular Spider-Man 169
22. Punisher War Journal 23
23. Give Me Liberty 2
24. Namor the Sub-Mariner 7
25. Incredible Hulk 374
26. Avengers 325
27. Avengers 324
28. Fantastic Four 345
29. Captain America 378
30. Avengers West Coast 63
31. Green Lantern 5
32. What If? 18
33. Justice League America 43
34. Silver Surfer 42
35. Justice League Europe 19
36. Alpha Flight 89
37. Daredevil 285
38. New Warriors 4
39. Thanos Quest 1
40. Marvel Comics Presents 62
41. Marvel Comics Presents 60
42. Marvel Comics Presents 61
43. Foolkiller 1
44. Legion of Super-Heroes Annual 1
45. Guardians of the Galaxy 5
46. Elfquest: Kings of the Broken Wheel 2
47. Superman 48
48. Thor 425
49. Thor 424
50. Demon 4

TOP DOLLAR COMICS

The following comics, graphic novels and trade paperbacks were given Top Dollar ratings based on the dollar volume of the copies sold (or are expected to sell) during the late August and September sales period.

1. Spider-Man 3
2. Aliens Vs. Predator 2
3. Terminator 1
4. World's Finest 2
5. Ghost Rider 6
6. Aliens: Earth War 2
7. Ghost Rider 5 (gold edition)
8. X-Men 269
9. Wolverine 32
10. Amazing Spider-Man 340
11. Give Me Liberty 2
12. Batman 455
13. Moon Knight 19
14. Detective 622
15. New Mutants 94
16. X-Factor 59
17. Excalibur 30
18. Punisher 40
19. Punisher 41
20. Punisher War Journal 23
21. Thanos Quest 1
22. Web of Spider-Man 69
23. Iron Man 261
24. Spectacular Spider-Man 169
25. Legion of Super-Heroes Annual 1
26. New Titans Annual 6
27. Alpha Flight 89
28. Wild Cards 1
29. Namor the Sub-Mariner 1
30. What If? 18
31. Marvel Comics 62
32. Marvel Comics 60
33. Marvel Comics 61
34. Foolkiller 1
35. Elfquest: Kings of Broken Wheel 2
36. Breathaker 2
37. Incredible Hulk 374
38. Akira 24
39. Avengers 325
40. Avengers 324
41. Demon 4
42. Magic Flute 2
43. New Titans 70
44. Fantastic Four 345
45. Captain America 378
46. Avengers West Coast 63
47. Green Lantern 5
48. Knights of the Pendragon 3
49. TSR Worlds Annual 1
50. Justice League America 43

TOP 10 BLACK & WHITE COMICS

1. Elfquest: Kings of the Broken Wheel
2. Planet of the Apes 4
3. Ape City 2
4. Lone Wolf & Cub 37
5. Darkman Movie Adaptation Magazine
6. Cat & Mouse 6
7. Cerebus 133
8. Bratpack 1
9. Model By Day 1
10. ARM 1

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TOP TEN NON-COMICS

The Top Ten Non-Comics is based on number and not dollar value. This category includes graphic novels, hardcovers, trade paperbacks, portfolios, etc. It includes books that actually were on sale during the September sales period.

1. Punisher: Kingdom Gone HC
2. Marvel Masterworks 13: X-Men 101-110
3. Who's Who 2
4. Overstreet Price Guide Update
5. Classics of Western Literature (Bloom County)
7. Spider-Man Vs. Kraven TPB
7. Batman: Lonely Place of Dying TPB
8. Ka-Zar GN
9. The Comic Book Makers
10. The Complete Alec TPB

CSN PREVIEW

proves that subtlety can be good, too...

The story seems just plain mysterious to me. I'm still trying to figure out how that ship got above the airplane, but I guess you're supposed to, huh?

For the first time in years First Comics is releasing a new ongoing title. *Meta 4* is the new book by Stephan (Squalor) Petrucha and Ian (Halo Jones) Gibson. The story is about some people who were attending the Harmonic Convergence gathering and gained super powers so they could help bring in a new age to humanity. Hey, whatever works for you!

Meta 4 is an entertaining comic. Petrucha and Gibson seem to have decided that it is possible to do a comic that is nothing more than what it pretends to be, which in this case means that they are poking fun at the fast-food hurry-up world of today while trying to warn those people of the danger that they are putting themselves and the world around them into.

You realize, of course, that there's no way to describe this book without making it sound critical of society today--and I think that's Petrucha's intent. While the book is light-hearted in approach and satirical in tone, there's an underlying criticism here--not only of our modern society, but of the "new age" philosophies that lead to the creation of these heroes. Petrucha proved he could poke fun at our society in *Squalor*; he continues to do so in *Meta-4*, albeit in a more upbeat manner.

The title characters are all elemental based individuals, but only in the most general of terms. Petrucha has given these characters slants to the old standards in unusual ways. For example, the fire based character seems to have a sort of earth-mother complex built in to her so that she can transcend the physical confines of her body. What exactly is happening in this book is left as a mystery to be explored, but there are lots of interesting avenues left open. I especially enjoyed the mystery of Mehitabel the cat, who claims that if she dies, so does the world.

I've always been a fan of Ian Gibson's work, so of course I'm going to like *Meta 4* artistically. Gibson has a unique style to his art that gives his characters an unusual amount of personality in their appearance. Gibson also has an excellent feel for mood, which can enhance a story immeasurably. And, as Alan Moore has said, "he draws really great women."

Gibson's art works much better here than it did on *Mister Miracle*; he needs a book that is lighter in tone, because his

Have you seen anything in this issue of *Comic Shop News* that you can't live without? Make sure you don't miss it; clip this handy coupon and write down the things that you want your comics shop owner to be sure to get for you!

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Be sure to give this to your retailer. Do not send it to CSN! Your comics shop will make every effort to get the items you want; some items may require a down payment before your shop owner can get them for you; be sure to ask!

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& REVIEWS

artwork tends to have a simple, almost cartoony feel that works best with books like *Meta-4*.

So, *Meta-4*, the world's first New Age comic book, has been launched, and judging from the first issue, I think she's going to stay afloat.

People have complained a little about *Miracleman Book 4: The Golden Age*. I've heard people talking about how slow paced the book is and how something just didn't feel right. These people should have more faith in Neil Gaiman than that.

Issue 19 of *Miracleman* is an example of what Gaiman can do. For a couple of issues previous, Gaiman has been building—setting a stage—and while issue 19 doesn't break from this pattern, I like to think that the stage has just gotten footlights. Things are becoming clearer, and a pattern is developing. In other words, this book is really getting good.

Issue 19 stars Andy Warhol. It seems that Andy has been brought back from the dead (and, true to form, had a dozen or so copies of himself made) and is roaming around the pyramid trying to keep himself entertained. One of his new jobs is to entertain another recent return from the dead, Dr. Emil Gargunza. Things get interesting from there.

The art by Mark Buckingham is pretty interesting in and of itself. Buckingham uses xeroxes and collages and repeated patterns throughout the book, to give the issue a very Pop feel to it. Andy would be proud (well, maybe not). In fact, this entire issue is as much an homage and chapter of the life of Andy Warhol as it is a story from the annals of *Miracleman*. But whatever the case, it is a very enjoyable read, and you can put that in your Campbell's Soup can and paint it.

The second issue Gaiman-Buckingham issue of *Miracleman* was a little "off-

putting." It seemed almost like a fill-in issue from the regular team. This time around, I feel like the storyline is actually going somewhere; I don't think Gaiman intends this storyline to be linear, so I can appreciate the character-driven approach he's taking. There was a moment in this book—the sequence in which we see the death of Gargunza at the hands of Miracleman from Gargunza's point of view—that was not only memorable, but managed to echo some of the best of the Alan Moore issues.

I'm also beginning to suspect that this varying artistic style that Buckingham is affecting isn't (as I'd first suspected) caused by an artist who was looking for a style of his own, but is instead an intentional variation to match artistic style with character personality. I'm intrigued...

Before we close this review column, let's take one more look at Nicieza and Bagley's *New Warriors*. Look, we've told you guys twice before that this book is much, much better than any of you expected it to be. Nicieza has taken a group of superheroes who had been dismissed by everyone as being "of limited potential" (to say the least) and has proven that it's the talent of the creators, not the characters they're given, that determines the quality of the book. And Mark Bagley, whose style has been developing steadily for the past few years, really seems to have found his niche with this title. *New Warriors* is a superhero title that has just enough humor to allow Mark to show off the full range of his talents; like DC's *Justice League* titles, it's tailor-made for artists who can illustrate both the dramatic and the absurd.

Bagley is fast on his way to becoming a fan favorite. I saw him at some conventions over the summer, and he had a crowd of New Fans surrounding him. Both Bagley and Nicieza are finding that they



New Warriors

have an unexpected hit on their hands. Watch this title, it's going places.

"The Man Who Stole Tomorrow" in *New Warriors 5* is the first part of a two-part storyline involving the Mandroids, Star Thief, and—ultimately—the Inhumans. It's a bit more action-oriented than a typical Giffen-DeMott *Justice League* storyline—but this book isn't intended to be a pastiche of the *Justice League*. It's a Marvel comic with a sense of humor, and

as such, it's quite refreshing!

Still, the only thing that I keep thinking of when I see that title is the old Marvel novel starring the Avengers. I don't know, maybe it's just me...

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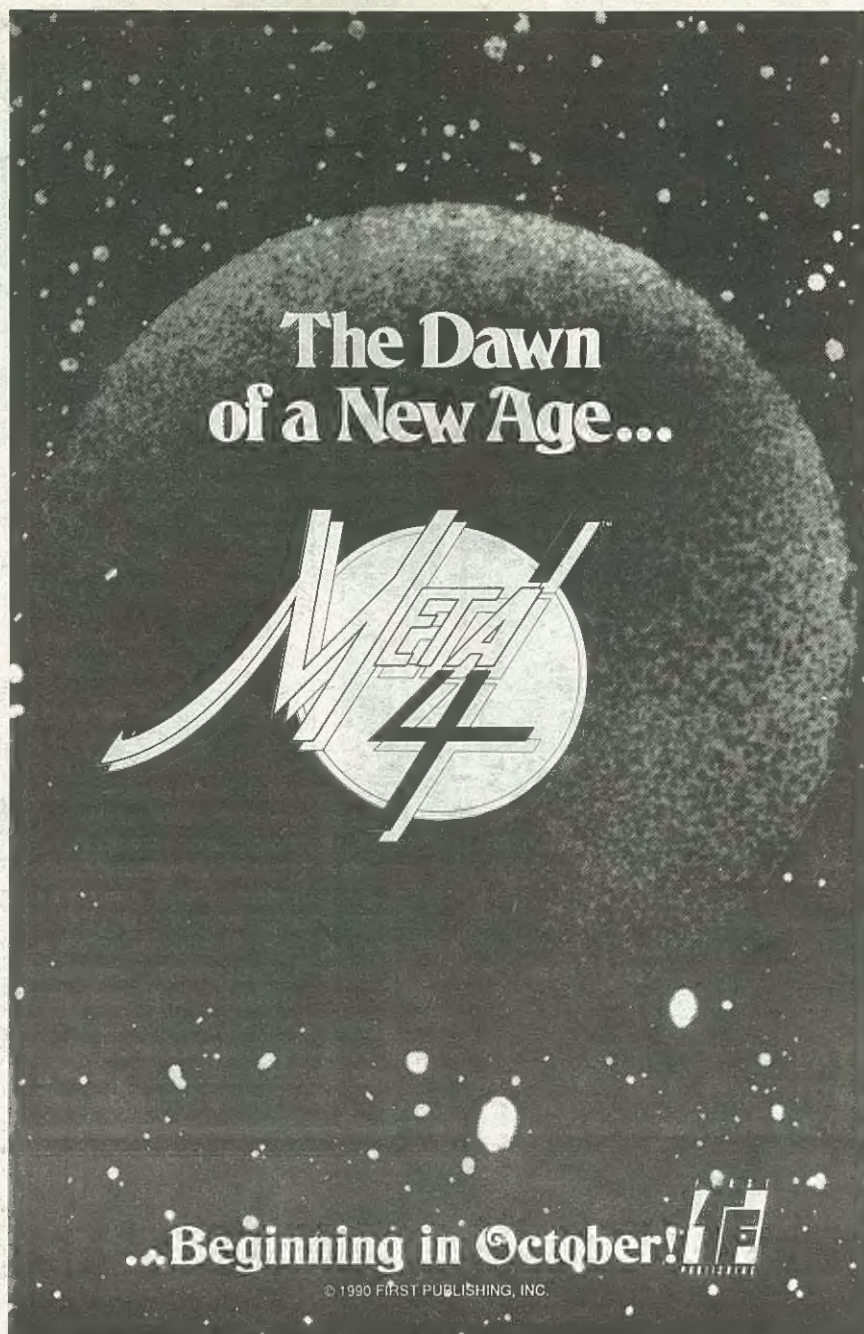


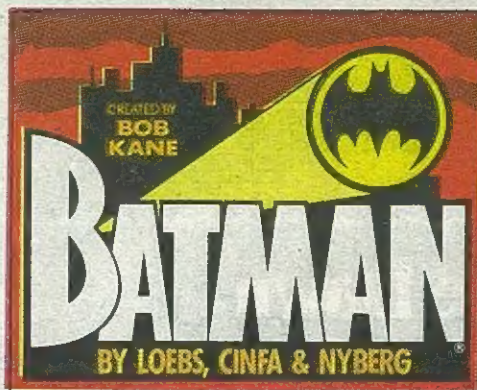
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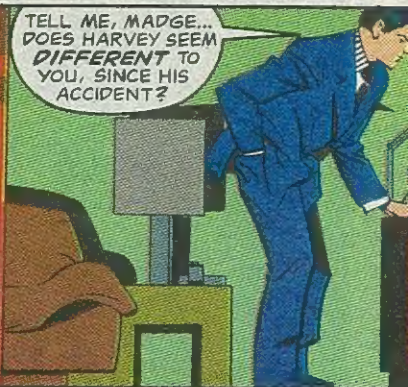


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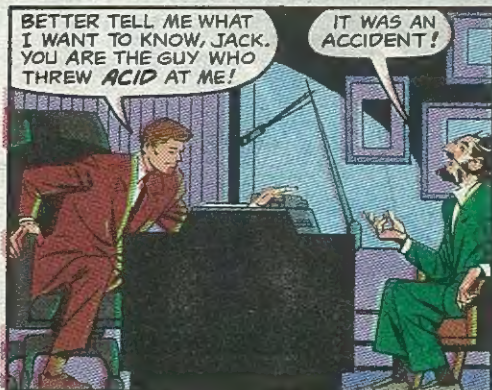


TELL ME, MADGE...
DOES HARVEY SEEM
DIFFERENT
TO YOU, SINCE HIS
ACCIDENT?



BETTER TELL ME WHAT
I WANT TO KNOW, JACK.
YOU ARE THE GUY WHO
THREW *ACID* AT ME!

IT WAS AN
ACCIDENT!



I HOPE
YOU DON'T HAVE
AN ACCIDENT,
JACK.



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DISORGANIZED.
SIMPSON AND
LEROQUE ARE
THE MOST
POWERFUL...



REALLY? A RESPECTED
FINANCIER AND A CITY
COUNCILMAN...
COMPETING TO
BE THE *KING* OF
THE *UNDER-
WORLD*? HOW
INTRIGUING.



I WONDER
I BELIEVE
YOU...



